

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DJIBOU 00409 230919Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-14 FBIE-00 INSE-00 CU-06
/112 W

-----099660 232028Z /70

R 220425Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 789
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
RUEHOT /AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 03
PAMEMBASSY PARIS 286
AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 0409
AID/W FOR AFR/EA
DEPT FOR ORM
E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES IN DJIBOUTI

1. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 300-500 ETHIOPIAN AND ERITREAN REFUGEES WHO ARE YOUNG (18-28), RELATIVELY WELL EDUCATED (ATLEAST HIGH SCHOOL, AND OFTEN 1 OR 2 YEARS UNIVERSITY TRAINING). THESE REFUGEES ARE TRULY IN LIMBO IN DJIBOUTI . THEY DO NOT SPEAK FRENCH, USUALLY SPEAKING POOR TO FAIR ENGLISH AND AMHARIC . THEY HAVE NO DEFINED STATUS IN DJIBOUTI, AND SELDOM ARE ISSUED IDENTIFICATION CARDS. THEY ARE OFTEN HASSLED BY THE POLICE WHO ,RECOGNIZING THEIR NON ISSA ORIGIN, PICK THEM UP WHEN ANY SUSPICIOUS POLITICAL ACTIVITY OCCURS. NEVERTHELESS, THESE STUDENTS AND PEOPLE REPRESENT A VALUABLE RESORCE WHICH SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO BE WASTED.

2. DESPITE UNHCR AND USG EFFORTS, WE FIND THE GOVERNMENT (GROD) DOES NOT ISSUE THEM EQUAL REFUGEE RATIONS. WHEN THEY DO STAY IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS, THEY ARE ISOLATED, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THEIR ORIGINS,
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BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY ARE EDUCATED NON-NOMADS.

3. UNHCR HAS MADE HEROIC EFFORTS TO ISSUE LAISSEZ-PASSER AND SOME EFFORTS TO SEE THAT THEY RECEIVE EEUAL RATIONS. UNFORTUNATELY, THE SMALL UNHCR OFFICE IN DJIBOUTI IS INUNDATED WITH REQUESTS AND DEALS WITH A GOVERNMENT (GROD) THAT MOVES AT A SICK SNAIL'S PACE. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE HERE , WE FIND THAT OUT OF

THE 300-500 POTENTIAL APPLICANTS, FOR IMMIGRANT STATUS TO THE U.S.
10 APPLICATIONS HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN SENT TO ROME/INS OFFICES. OF THE
TEN APPLICANTS, ONLY ONE HAS BEEN GIVEN IMMIGRANT STATUS.
4. BECAUSE OF THE PAST US POLICIES IN ETHIOPIA, THESE STUDENTS LOOK
TO THE U.S. FOR AID AND SUCCOR. ALL WERE RAISED DURING A PERIOD
WHEN THE USG PROJECTED AN IMAGE TO ETHIOPIANS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THAN
THAN THAT PROJECTED TODAY. FOR EXAMPLE, EXCERPTS FROM ONE OF THE
MANY LETTERS WE RECEIVE EACH WEEK QUOTE MY FATHER WAS A LOYER (SIC)
IN THE HIGH COURT OF ADDIS. HE IS NOW A PRISONER AND MY MOTHER AND I
FLED BECAUSE OUR FRIENDS WERE BEING KILLED... THE UNITED STATES IS
MY ONLY HOPE.. END QUOTE.
5. THE OUTLOOK FOR THESE STUDENTS IS BLEAK. THERE IS LITTLE HOPE
THEY CAN RETURN TO ETHIOPIA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THEY WILL NOT BE
ASSIMILATED AND RETURN INTO DJIBOUTI SOCIETY AND THEY CANNOT LEAVE

HERE BECAUSE OF LACK OF MONEY . THE LACK OF AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE TO

THESE RELATIVELY WELL EDUCATED, POTENTIAL AFRICAN LEADERS,
IS MOST FRUSTRATING TO ALL. WE ARE VERY AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS FACING
ORM AND INS VIS-A-VIS THESE REFUGEES. OBVIOUSLY ONLY A FEW WILL EVER
MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS CURRENTLY BEING APPLIED. HOWEVER, WE ARE NOT
AWARE OF ANY ORGANIZATION, VIETNAM REFUGEE LIKE, THAT MIGHT PROVIDE
TRAVEL, EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, SUCH AS IN- PLACE VOCATIONAL TRAIN-
ING, MAINTENANCE TO THESE VICTIMS OF A TRAGIC SITUATION.
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6. CAN ORM OR AID/W PROVIDE US WITH LISTS OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT THESE
STUDENTS MIGHT WRITE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL
SCHOLARSHIPS? WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR CIRCULATING THIS REQUEST TO
THE VOLAG COMMUNITY IN THE HOPES THAT WE CAN IDENTIFY SOME RECOURSE
FOR THIS POTENTIALLY EXCELLENT MANPOWER SOURCE.
CLARKE

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, STUDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DJIBOU00409
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780128-1123
Format: TEL
From: DJIBOUTI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780339/aaaabgmq.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 966cc1bf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3243230
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES IN DJIBOUTI
TAGS: SREF, ET, DJ, UNHCR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/966cc1bf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014